

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
AND RECORD OF ACTION

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February 10, 2004

**FROM:** **NORMAN A. KANOLD**, Interim Assistant County Administrator  
Economic Development/Public Services Group

**PETER R. HILLS**, County Fire Chief/Fire Warden  
San Bernardino County Fire Department

**SUBJECT: CONTINUATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY CONCERNING EXTREME  
WILDFIRE-RELATED MUDSLIDE AND FLOODING CONDITIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Continue the emergency proclamation originally proclaimed by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors on December 30, 2003, and ratified by the members of the Board on January 6, 2004, concerning extreme wildfire-related mudslide and flooding conditions, which still exists and continues to be an emergency.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** On December 30, 2003, acting as Director of Emergency Services of the County of San Bernardino, the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors signed a Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency concerning extreme wildfire-related mudslide and flooding conditions starting December 24 and 25, 2003, which still exist and constitute an emergency. On January 6, 2004, the Board of Supervisors ratified the action of the Board Chairman made on December 30, 2003. The Board is required to review and continue the proclamation on either 14-day or 21-day intervals in accordance with California Government Code section 8630, if there is a continuance of the local emergency.

During a period when the Board meets weekly, the proclamation must be reviewed every 14 days in accordance with Government Code section 8630(c)(2). If the Board does not meet weekly (e.g. due to a holiday), the proclamation must be reviewed every 21 days in accordance with Government Code section 8630(c)(1). The Board last took action to continue the proclamation on January 27, 2004, and approval of this recommendation would continue the emergency for an additional period in accordance with Government Code section 8630.

As background, the Grand Prix and Old Fires began this year on October 21 and October 25, respectively, and burned over 150,000 acres; destroyed or damaged over 1,100 structures; and resulted in six deaths in the County. The burned and unstable soils resulting from the fires have caused an extreme potential for erosion, flooding, and major debris flows in and around the County's valley and mountain communities. These conditions were gravely exacerbated by the torrential rainfall, mudslides and flooding that began on December 24 and 25, 2003. The flooding resulted in various major separate geographical incidents including flash flooding in the Cable Canyon Area of Devore, Waterman Canyon, San Antonio Heights, and Lytle Creek, and a train derailment in the Cajon Pass. These incidents resulted in 15 deaths with one person still missing.

Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors

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On January 14, 2004, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reopened the incident period until February 2, 2004, for the Southern California Wildfire Disaster (FEMA-1498-DR) to include flooding, mud and debris flows because of the fires. This action allowed the County and cities within San Bernardino County to apply for recovery of all wildfire-related mudslide and flooding response costs.

Although this incident period ended on February 2, 2004, it is appropriate for the County to continue the local emergency proclamation throughout the winter months, due to the probability of additional wildfire-related mudslide and flooding incidents.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY OTHERS:** This item was reviewed by County Counsel (Deputy Dennis Tilton, 387-5246) on January 26, 2004, and the County Administrative Office (Wayne Thies, Administrative Analyst, 387-5409) on January 29, 2004.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** There is no financial impact associated with this action to continue the proclamation.

**SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS:** All

**PRESENTERS:** Peter R. Hills, (909) 387-5974  
Denise L. Benson (909) 356-3998